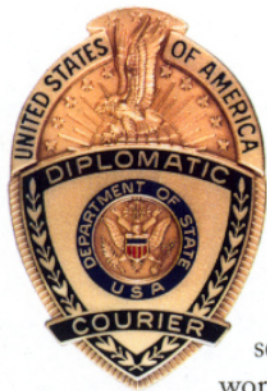


# DIPLOMATIC COURIER



United States Department of State





The men and women of the Diplomatic Courier Service are specially trained Foreign Service career professionals. Diplomatic Couriers are entrusted with ensuring the inviolability of diplomatic pouches and their secure delivery throughout the world. They are required to safeguard and escort diplomatic pouches containing classified and sensitive material between U.S. diplomatic missions overseas and the Department of State. They operate under the auspices of international agreements and treaties as governed by the Vienna Convention. Diplomatic Couriers are not armed. The Diplomatic Courier Service was created in 1918 and has a strong tradition of excellent service under all kinds of conditions.

## QUALIFICATIONS

A career as a Diplomatic Courier in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security is not for everyone. Competition for these positions is intense and candidates must meet a number of requirements. Candidates must be U.S. citizens between 21 and 59 years of age. Male candidates born after 1959 must be registered under the Selective Service Act. Candidates must possess a valid US driver's license. Candidates must be willing to live and serve anywhere in the world including the United States. Regardless of where candidates are assigned, they will spend a majority of their time traveling. A substantial portion of a Diplomatic Courier's career is spent overseas.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

While the Diplomatic Courier Vacancy Announcement is open, those who meet all basic qualifications for Diplomatic Courier can apply to participate in the examination process. Applications can be accepted *only* during the period that the job announcement is open. The process begins with the submission of an application form, a supplementary questionnaire, and a brief autobiography.

The most competitive qualified applicants will be offered an opportunity to take a written examination. Applicants must pass the writing skills assessment to be eligible to appear before an oral examining panel of the Board of Examiners for the Foreign Service. Those who are successful in all aspects of the process are placed on a rank-ordered list of eligible-to-hire candidates. Candidates can remain on the list for up to 24 months.

When positions become available, candidates on the eligible-to-hire list are contacted and made a conditional offer of employment for a specific class opening. Candidates who are made a conditional offer must undergo an in-depth background investigation, pass an extensive medical examination, and be found suitable for Foreign Service employment.

Candidates who pass the entire clearance process are offered probationary appointments as Foreign Service Diplomatic Courier career candidates. Upon successful completion of a four-year period, probationary couriers are offered career appointments.

## SPECIALIZED TRAINING

Approximately six weeks of training begins in Washington, DC with a Department of State orientation program followed by several weeks of courier-specific training. Subject areas include rules, regulations and procedures, briefing and debriefing a courier trip, revising travel plans, completing the documentation required for a courier trip, as well as time and attendance reporting procedures. Training also includes problems a courier is likely to encounter.

## FIRST ASSIGNMENT: PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE BASICS

Diplomatic Couriers are normally assigned to a 2-year tour of duty at a Regional Diplomatic Courier Division or hub; currently there are nine such assignment locations: Abidjan, Ivory Coast; Bangkok,

Thailand; Frankfurt, Germany; Helsinki, Finland; Manama, Bahrain; Pretoria, South Africa; Seoul, Korea; Ft. Lauderdale, FL, and Washington, DC. Diplomatic Couriers are assigned responsibilities on a regional basis; as a result they travel frequently. Diplomatic Couriers spend the majority of their careers overseas.





## CAREER ADVANCEMENT: ON TO GREATER RESPONSIBILITIES

With proven aptitudes and on-the-job performance, a Diplomatic Courier may advance to the position of Diplomatic Courier Officer. Diplomatic Courier Officers are given the responsibility for managing courier operations for as many as 20 U.S. embassies and consulates. Later in their career, a select few may achieve the rank of Regional Diplomatic Courier Officer with responsibility for managing a Regional Diplomatic Courier Division or a headquarters office at the Department of State with responsibility for courier support operations worldwide.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

U.S. Department of State  
Application Evaluation Branch – 5<sup>th</sup> floor  
Attention: DS Recruitment Office (DCS)  
2401 E Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20522  
Telephone: 202-261-8941

Department of State internet website:  
[www.state.gov/www/careers.html](http://www.state.gov/www/careers.html)

## SALARY AND BENEFITS

Initial salary will normally be at the first step of Foreign Service grade FP-6; current salary levels are listed in the formal Vacancy Announcement. Higher salaries, within grade FP-6, are available for candidates who have directly related specialized work experience. Satisfactory performance earns candidates an automatic grade and pay increase after 12 months and again after an additional 18 months. Thereafter, promotions are competitive and based upon annual performance reviews and the recommendations of annual selection panels.

The Foreign Service offers an excellent benefits package that includes:

- Group life and health insurance
- Annual leave and sick leave accrual
- Retirement plan
- Rest and recuperation leave with transportation partially paid (for employees and eligible family members during assignment to certain hardship posts)
- Government-provided quarters or housing allowance at overseas posts
- Education allowance for eligible family members at overseas posts
- Danger pay at designated posts
- Cost of living allowances where costs are substantially higher than Washington, DC
- Moving expenses for assignments
- Home leave to the United States between overseas assignments